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The junior college is the most rapidly multiplying educational institution in the country, and it is predicted that all college students will spend their first two years there by the end of this century. Reasons given for the increasing popularity of these schools include ease of entry, low cost, the opportunity for a second chance, small classes, teaching-oriented rather than research-oriented faculty, two-year technical and vocational programs, proximity of campuses to home, and the chance for students to try out college life with the option after two years to terminate or to transfer for further education. (MC)

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Junior College:

More and more high school students are taking a new look at the two-year college

BY ROUL TUNLEY

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Massachusetts Bay Community College in Boston doesn't look like a movie version of the ivied campus. But you would never have guessed that from the enthusiasm of the pretty, nineteen-year-old sophomore who was showing me around this state-supported junior college. She proudly took me through the main building, a remodeled industrial plant that once belonged to the Raytheon Company. Then we visited a series of makeshift classrooms in temporary wooden structures clustered around the asphalt parking lot.

"I suppose these funny buildings look like chicken coops," she said, "but we love them."

The remark was unexpected—and significant. That same day students at a nearby campus (Boston University) were rioting in front of some very imposing buildings. They had, in fact, locked the president out of his office. Simultaneously, other four-year colleges across the land were being assaulted by strikes, marches, sit-ins, pickets, protests and

Now I'm on the dean's list. And my marks are good enough to transfer to just about any college I want. I think it's because classes are smaller here, and you feel closer to the teachers. They seem to care about you."

Her attitude is not unusual. Without tradition, age, heavy endowments, impressive architecture or athletic superiority, these new junior (or community) colleges are creating strong loyalties among their students, who feel such institutions give them not only a second chance but the kind of education that is relevant to their particular requirements.

At present only nineteen percent of those in elementary school go through college. The rest drop out along the way for a variety of reasons: money, grades, or the feeling that our educational system doesn't hold the answer to their needs. Among those who actually enter regular colleges, the drop-out rate is close to fifty percent! Many leave because of the usual financial or scholastic reasons, but many also leave

maximum potential. This—plus the population increase—has created a growing gap between those who get a higher education and those who are capable but don't get it.

These facts demonstrate the need for junior colleges, and no type of educational institution has been multiplying faster; they are now opening at the rate of one a week. Only five years ago, two-year colleges had a total enrollment of 800,000 students. Today it is twice that. In fact, *one out of every three college-bound students is entering a two-year school.* In California, almost eighty percent of *all* freshmen and sophomores are in junior colleges. Experts predict that by the end of this century virtually all college students will be spending their first two years in them. By then, it is forecast, most universities will have become "arsenals of specialization" reserved for juniors, seniors and graduate students. One state university being built in Florida has already announced plans to accept no freshmen or soph-

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The remark was unexpected—and significant. That same day students at a nearby campus (Boston University) were rioting in front of some very imposing buildings. They had, in fact, locked the president out of his office. Simultaneously, other four-year colleges across the land were being assaulted by strikes, marches, sit-ins, pickets, protests and pitched battles with police. Massachusetts Bay was not only completely quiet at that moment, but, interestingly enough, it had *never* had a riot. Come to think of it, I'd never heard of any junior college that had. I asked my guide why.

"I don't know much about other places, but I guess we have a different attitude about college here," she said, "You see, I flunked out of the university I was at. I just couldn't get with it. Then I got a second chance—at Mass Bay.

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A look at those drop-out rates suggests that the old four-year college system, which might have been adequate for another, less complex age, is not enabling an inordinately large percentage of qualified students to reach their

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Why has a brand of schooling that has been on the market for years suddenly become the most popular item on the educational shelf? Teachers, students and officials in many parts of the country give the following reasons:

EASE OF ENTRY. On the theory that anyone who wants higher education should be given a chance,

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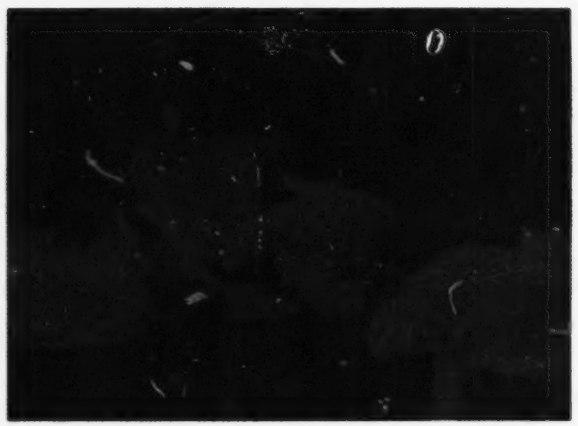

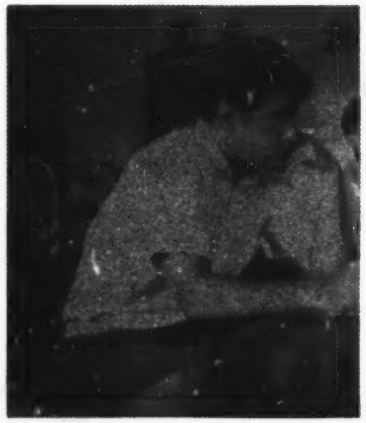

In library, classroom, laboratory, even cafeteria, students from Massachusetts Bay Community College display an "appetite for learning" not always found in conventional colleges. They profit from their close rapport with teachers who are not required to publish and have more time for teaching and consultation

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.....a second chance

the doors of junior (or community) colleges open at a wider angle than other schools. This does not mean that the student will necessarily stay in or graduate (about a fifth flunk out the first year), but it does mean he has the opportunity to try. For example, Edward Hart, a sophomore at Massachusetts Bay, who was recently elected a member of that school's Student Council, said: "When I finished high school, I had such mediocre grades that no four-year college would touch me. But Mass Bay took me, and since I've been here, I've learned to study. Now I'm in line to transfer to any number of four-year colleges." His experience underlines an interesting fact: so successful are some students in junior college that for the first time they develop an appetite for learning. Statistics show that about one-third of all two-year college students go on to regular colleges.

Many junior colleges will take anyone with [illegible] get a passing grade." The entry system works well with "late bloomers," those young persons who through lack of maturity or motivation do not do well in their high school years but turn into satisfactory students later on.

COST. The average cost for a resident student last year (1967) at a private four-year college, according to a Department of Health, Education and Welfare survey, was $2,570. At a public college it was $1,640. The price for both types is rising from three to five percent a year. It is estimated that only one out of four families today can meet even the lowest level of such costs. On the other hand cost for the public two-year college is low; tuition averages only a little more than $200 across the country. In some states (New York and California) there is no tuition at all. And because students are usually within commuting distance and can live at home, the cost of this kind of education is within the reach of most families.

for instance, takes approximately three hundred students each year who have failed in other colleges. "About sixty-four percent of our salvages are successful," says its dean, Ross Toole. "That is, they are able to graduate from here and go on to four-year colleges if they want to." He cited the case of a nineteen-year-old boy who had dropped out of West Point for scholastic reasons and was discouraged to the point of giving up all further study. But somehow he was persuaded to try South Texas, where he spent two years and made the dean's list. He eventually went on to Louisiana State University, from which he graduated with honors.

One of the most successful students at Massachusetts Bay, both socially and scholastically, was a young man who had flunked out of a liberal arts college in the Midwest. "He really made a mess of things," said John F. McKenzie, the community college president. "We admitted him not on his record but

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Many junior colleges will take anyone with a high school diploma or even those "over eighteen who can benefit from further education." In Pasadena, Texas, for example, James Godbe, of the San Jacinto Junior College faculty, sums up the policy as follows: "If you have a high school diploma, we'll accept you regardless of your grades. We give *everybody* a chance. Even if you *don't* have a high school diploma, we'll admit you if you take a GED (graduate equivalency diploma) test and

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OPPORTUNITY FOR A S[illegible] CHANCE. So many students have been able to undo earlier scholastic failures after they reach two-year colleges that it's difficult to overemphasize the "second chance" value of such schools. South Texas Junior College, in Houston, Texas, where he spent two years and made the dean's list. He eventually went on to Louisiana State University, from which he graduated with honors.

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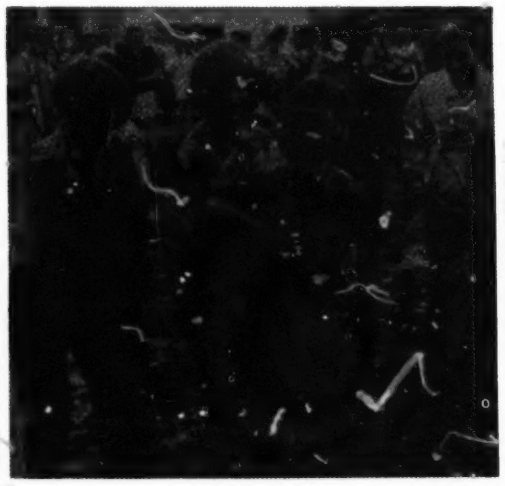
Not all students do well, of course. Especially when they get *(continued on page 160)*



Students at New York City's celebrated Fashion Institute of Technology learn weaving, fitting and illustration as part of the curriculum. But it's not all study at junior colleges as the girls (far right) at Texas' San Jacinto discover during the annual pig-chasing contest between freshmen and sophomores

the idea that junior colleges are as easy to get *through* as they are to get into. Lisa, an attractive eighteen-year-old brunette, had been an honor student in high school. But the sudden independence of college life at Massachusetts Bay was too much for her. "Someone took the handcuffs off her and she just wasn't mature enough to cope with it," commented a faculty member. "She spent most of her time in the student lounge instead of in class and socialized herself right out of school. She flunked the first semester with four D's." At present Lisa is trying hard to get back in, and it looks as though the school will give her a second chance. But her case makes clear an important fact: although junior colleges are permissive in their entry rules, getting a degree is no cakewalk.

Teaching. One of the important reasons why students who have failed elsewhere succeed in junior colleges is the close contact between students and faculty. On the whole, classes are smaller. The big impersonal lecture courses of many universities, with teachers addressing hundreds, even thousands, of students through microphones, is almost unknown at two-year colleges. Furthermore, each faculty member at a school like Massachusetts Bay has his own office where he is readily available to students who want to drop by. And the faculty is not caught up in the publish-or-perish syndrome of the large universities.

"In the university, you get an altogether different kind of faculty member," says President McKenzie. "He's not interested solely in teaching, but in research and writing as well. Here at Mass Bay the faculty is selected solely because they're good teachers and have some rapport with young people. For this reason I think you'll find some of the best teaching today in junior colleges."

Teachers agree with him. Arthur Winters, an associate professor at New York's famous vocational junior college, the Fashion Institute of Technology, who was once

sions (including medical technicians), data processing, electronics, textile design, cosmetology, secretarial and merchandising.

The undecided student. Many high school students don't know whether they want to go to college or not. Rather than commit themselves for four years and then drop out if they decide it's not for them, they can go to junior college and see how it works out. If the results are positive, they can transfer to a four-year college. If not, they can at least emerge with an associate degree.

The junior college is not new. An American invention, it first appeared as a private institution in the nineteenth century. By 1900, there were eight. One year later, the first public junior college was established—in Joliet, Illinois. Growth remained slow for the next fifty years, and it is only in the last decade that rapid acceleration began. Today there are at least 850.

Although all these two-year institutions are classified as junior colleges and grant "associate" rather than baccalaureate degrees, the publicly supported ones are also known as community colleges; the two terms are often used interchangeably. Whatever the name, they all fall into three categories: private, public and specialty (which may be either public or private).

The private ones may be residential or not, coeducational or not.

Specialty schools—a far smaller number—are those junior colleges which were set up originally to serve specific professions or occupations. In this category are New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, Milwaukee's Institute of Technology, and various agricultural and technical schools. Most of these, however, are fast becoming comprehensive, with much broader curriculums in the liberal arts and sciences. Together, the private and specialty schools comprise about fifteen percent of the total of junior colleges.

The largest group by far, and

moment it opened its doors, there was no doubt about its success. In its first year the school attracted 419 students. Many more were soon clamoring to get in, but there was no room. The college looked for larger quarters. It found them in the unused Raytheon plant. But this too was rapidly outgrown. Today thousands of students are being turned away because present facilities cannot accommodate them.

By now, of course, the state has no doubt of the need for the community college, and in the case of Massachusetts Bay has set aside $30,000,000 to build a new school. In five years, when this is completed, the enrollment is expected to rise to 7,500 day students, almost six times the present number. Meanwhile, Massachusetts has already opened eleven other community colleges and has plans for even more.

President McKenzie, like other educators, believes that the junior college must resist all temptation to "upgrade" itself into a four-year college, and that it can meet many of the pressing needs of the community which four-year colleges often ignore. "We cannot remain aloof from the people around us," he insists.

To this end, he runs his school on a round-the-clock, round-the-calendar basis—for both young people and adults. When he learned, for example, that the area had an acute nursing shortage, he immediately arranged for courses to train nurses, affiliating the program with leading Boston hospitals. Moreover, since the school is close to the nation's greatest concentration of electronics firms (along route 128), Massachusetts Bay has also set up a number of courses to train technicians for this industry. The whole curriculum, in fact, has grown so that it now includes, in addition to the usual liberal arts and sciences program, a range of vocational courses from shorthand and physical therapy to management engineering.

None of this curriculum is pur-

year tuition for all this. They have their choice of liberal arts courses as well as technical ones that train them for such careers as airline pilot, home economist, registered nurse, food expert, photographer, and many others.

Also in the private category (but not multiplying—there are only thirty-nine in the country) are the private residential, exclusively male or female colleges. Some of the oldest and most prestigious, in fact, are exclusively for girls. This group includes schools like Bradford and Pine Manor in Massachusetts, Briarcliff and Bennett in New York, Centenary in New Jersey, and Colby in New Hampshire. Many of these were famous as finishing schools in another era. Early in the century, the young ladies in attendance studied painting, embroidery, music and other ladylike pursuits which in theory would enhance their marriageability. Today, except for a few schools in the South, the finishing school curriculum is out of date. Courses are more serious, and standards are higher.

Also in the private sector are the religiously affiliated junior colleges, such as St. Mary's in Minneapolis or Marymount in Arlington, Virginia.

Typical of the best of the women's residential schools is historic Bradford, in the Massachusetts town of the same name. It was founded as a coeducational academy in 1803; Cornelius Felton, a former president of Harvard University, was among its students. Over the years it gradually evolved into a women's junior college, whose alumni include such noted persons as Booker T. Washington's daughter Portia, and Esther Forbes, Pulitzer Prize writer. As expensive as any private four-year college, today's tuition runs $3,600 a year.

It would be unrealistic, of course, to maintain that junior colleges have all the advantages of four-year colleges and none of the disadvantages. Certainly anyone considering any two-year college should take into account their

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Teachers agree with him. Arthur Winters, an associate professor at New York's famous vocational junior college, the Fashion Institute of Technology, who was once a faculty member at four-year Brooklyn College, says: "I came here because I like to teach and can do it at a junior college. You get involved with students in a way that just doesn't happen when you're at a regular college."

Junior college teachers are also pleased with the salary scale. Top pay at Massachusetts Bay, for example, is $16,500 for a nine-month year, with extra pay for a longer schedule. Other school officials are equally well remunerated. The president of Dallas' community colleges earns $35,000 a year and is the highest-paid public official in the county.

Training and jobs. Perhaps the most important function of junior colleges is in terminal, or career, education. Many educators, especially those in specialty schools, like Dean Marion K. Brandriss of the Fashion Institute of Technology, believe that two-year colleges should remind themselves constantly that this is their main function and not allow themselves to get caught up in a race to prepare more and more students for four-year colleges. Donna Nausbaum, nineteen, of Manhattan, an FIT student, agrees completely. "In my field, fashion, you just don't need four years," she said. "Two is enough. Why waste the extra time?"

Other fields in which junior college training is sufficient to get good jobs are the health professions. Hospitals, for example, are desperate for technicians to operate the complex machinery of modern medicine. Many junior colleges have responded to this need. Nassau Community College, on Long Island, has a program for training operating room technicians. Students learn how to assist surgeons, how to prepare patients for surgery, how to operate the heart-lung machine. Graduates are in great demand.

Similarly, Massachusetts Bay, when it learned that the area had an acute nursing shortage, he immediately arranged for courses to train nurses, affiliating the program with leading Boston hospitals. Moreover, since the school is close to the nation's greatest concentration of electronics firms (along route 128), Massachusetts Bay has also set up a number of courses to train technicians for this industry. The whole curriculum, in fact, has grown so that it now includes, in addition to the usual liberal arts and sciences program, a range of vocational courses from shorthand and physical therapy to management engineering.

None of this curriculum is pursued in cloistered isolation. The outside community is invited to lectures and other college events, and the school's students and faculty often go into ghetto areas to set up classes, tutor youngsters individually, or coach athletic teams. For this reason, there seems to be little of the town-versus-gown dichotomy that causes friction in so many college communities.

In nonurban areas, where the population has burgeoned during the last two decades, junior colleges have likewise prospered.

In Pasadena, Texas, sixteen miles from the city of Houston, is San Jacinto Junior College, a two-year public institution that has all the physical amenities of the best four-year college except dormitories. Started only six years ago with three hundred students, its enrollment has climbed to a current 6,200. The state was generous, and the result is a handsome campus with new, red-brick buildings spread out over 141 landscaped acres. The college has well-equipped, air-conditioned laboratories and classrooms, an ultra-modern library, a swimming pool, a baseball field, tennis courts and even a nine-hole golf course. Students at San Jacinto pay only $100 a

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The largest group by far, and the fastest-growing, are the public ones, which constitute the other eighty-five percent. Most states are planning eventually to have one within driving distance of every built-up area. Already every state has at least one such school where students have a choice of pursuing vocational, technical or liberal arts courses.

The Massachusetts story may be considered typical. Eight years ago, this state had no community college at all. But its population, which was declining before World War II, has recently been exploding and that, plus the rising educational expectations of people everywhere, made the state realize that the existing state-supported four-year colleges could not meet the demand; something more was necessary.

Accordingly, in 1961, state educational officials asked John F. McKenzie, a Harvard graduate and ex-dean of Boston University, to start a community college—Massachusetts Bay. Since the need for this kind of school, however, was still not proved but merely assumed, the state did not give its maximum financial support. The start was therefore tentative. An abandoned Boston University building in a poor section of the city was made available, and both students and teachers rolled up their sleeves and literally moved in furniture and books. From the

founded as a coeducational academy in 1803; Cornelius Felton, a former president of Harvard University, was among its students. Over the years it gradually evolved into a women's junior college, whose alumni include such noted persons as Booker T. Washington's daughter Portia, and Esther Forbes, Pulitzer Prize writer. As expensive as any private four-year college, today's tuition runs $3,600 a year.

It would be unrealistic, of course, to maintain that junior colleges have all the advantages of four-year colleges and none of the disadvantages. Certainly anyone considering any two-year college should take into account their chief drawbacks.

Community college students, of course, miss the adventure of living away from home, and campus life is often curtailed because most students go right home after classes. These colleges, moreover, often lack the wide diversity of liberal arts courses available at four-year institutions.

Another disadvantage sometimes cited by community college students is being thrown only with people from their own area. "I wish," said Mary Mullen, of Massachusetts Bay, "that we had more opportunity to meet people from other parts of the country."

If you haven't the means to go to a conventional college, if your marks at this point are not up to it, but you want to work for a second chance, if you want a specific type of technical training, if you want to live at home, a junior college may be just right for you. Certainly it's right for many people. And certainly it's right for the country as a whole, supplying a much-needed diversity to our educational system.

THE END

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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